

ZCZC LBBPNSLBB DEF
TTAA00 KLBB DDHMM

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE LUBBOCK TX
300 PM CST MON MAR 3 2003

WRITTEN BY NWS AMARILLO
...CONTINUING SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK IN TEXAS...

TORNADO SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

SCHOOLS POSE A SPECIAL CONCERN REGARDING SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY. FOR INSTANCE...SCHOOLS HAVE LARGE NUMBERS OF STUDENTS AND STAFF...ALL OF WHICH MUST MOVE QUICKLY TO SHELTER IF SEVERE WEATHER IS OCCURRING. PORTABLE CLASSROOMS AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES ENHANCE SCHOOLS VULNERABILITY TO SEVERE WEATHER.

WHILE SCHOOLS MUST CONTEND WITH A WIDE RANGE OF SEVERE AND HAZARDOUS WEATHER IN TEXAS...THERE ARE SIX STEPS WHICH WILL HELP SCHOOLS DEVELOP A PLAN FOR KEEPING STUDENTS AND FACULTY AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE.

1. DESIGNATE SHELTER AREAS. BASEMENTS OFFER THE BEST PROTECTION...BUT INTERIOR HALLWAYS AWAY FROM WINDOWS OFFER SOME PROTECTION. AUDITORIUMS...GYMNASIUMS...AND OTHER STRUCTURES WITH HIGH WIDE SPAN ROOFS SHOULD BE AVOIDED.
2. CONDUCT DRILLS ON A REGULAR BASIS.
3. HAVE RELIABLE AND REDUNDANT MEANS TO RECEIVE WEATHER INFORMATION. NOAA WEATHER RADIO IS THE MOST RELIABLE WAY TO RECEIVE SEVERE WEATHER INFORMATION. HOWEVER...THE INTERNET...PAGERS...AND LOCAL MEDIA OUTLETS CAN ALL OFFER UP TO THE MINUTE WEATHER INFORMATION. EACH WAY TO RECEIVE INFORMATION CAN SERVE AS A BACKUP IN CASE ANY OF THE OTHER OUTLETS FAIL.
4. HAVE RELIABLE AND REDUNDANT WAYS TO RELAY INFORMATION WITHIN THE SCHOOL. WHEN SEVERE WEATHER STRIKES...YOU MAY ONLY HAVE A FEW SECONDS TO REACT. UTILIZE AS MANY METHODS AS POSSIBLE TO GET CRITICAL INFORMATION TO THE STAFF AND STUDENTS.
5. ENSURE EACH STAFF MEMBER IS FAMILIAR WITH THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. WAITING FOR SEVERE WEATHER TO OCCUR IS NOT THE TIME TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO. EACH STAFF MEMBER SHARES RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN...AND THEY ALL SHOULD KNOW WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF SEVERE WEATHER.
6. KEEP ABREAST OF THE LATEST FORECASTS. WHEN THE POTENTIAL FOR SEVERE WEATHER EXISTS...BE PREPARED TO ACT. PAY ATTENTION TO

SEVERE WEATHER OUTLOOKS AND WATCHES. THEN...ACT IMMEDIATELY WHEN WARNINGS ARE ISSUED OR SEVERE WEATHER OCCURS.

HAVE YOUR SCHOOLS SAFETY PLAN IN PLACE LONG BEFORE ANY SEVERE WEATHER OCCURS. DEVELOP YOUR PLAN...PRACTICE YOUR PLAN...ENACT YOUR PLAN.